

Incidentally found abnormal discoloration of ileal mucosa

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Question

A 27 year old male was evaluated for ongoing abdominal pain associated with altered bowel habits for past 3 months. Previous investigations including hemogram, liver and kidney function tests were normal. Abdominal computed tomography was also normal. For evaluation of his symptoms, the patient underwent colonoscopy which showed normal colonic mucosa. However the ileal mucosa appeared to be discoloured without any mucosal abnormality (Figure 1). Upper endoscopy also showed similar patchy discoloration in the duodenum.

Answer

Gastrointestinal hemosiderosis

Histology revealed deposition of pigment in the lamina propria which was confirmed to be iron on Pearl's stain (Figure 2 A and B). Iron deposition was noted on histological evaluation of the stomach and the duodenum also. His iron profile was normal. He confirmed intake of oral iron supplements. He was advised to discontinue the same. At 2 months of follow-up his abdominal symptoms had abated.



Fig. 1. — Ileoscopy showing discoloration of the mucosa

Gastrointestinal hemosiderosis is an uncommonly reported condition which has been reported with oral or parenteral iron therapy, iron overload states like hemochromatosis, chronic kidney disease, diabetes mellitus and intake of certain drugs like hydralazine. Usually detected incidentally, the clinicians should be aware of the entity and endoscopic images mimic other cause of such discoloration like intake of anthraquinone laxatives.

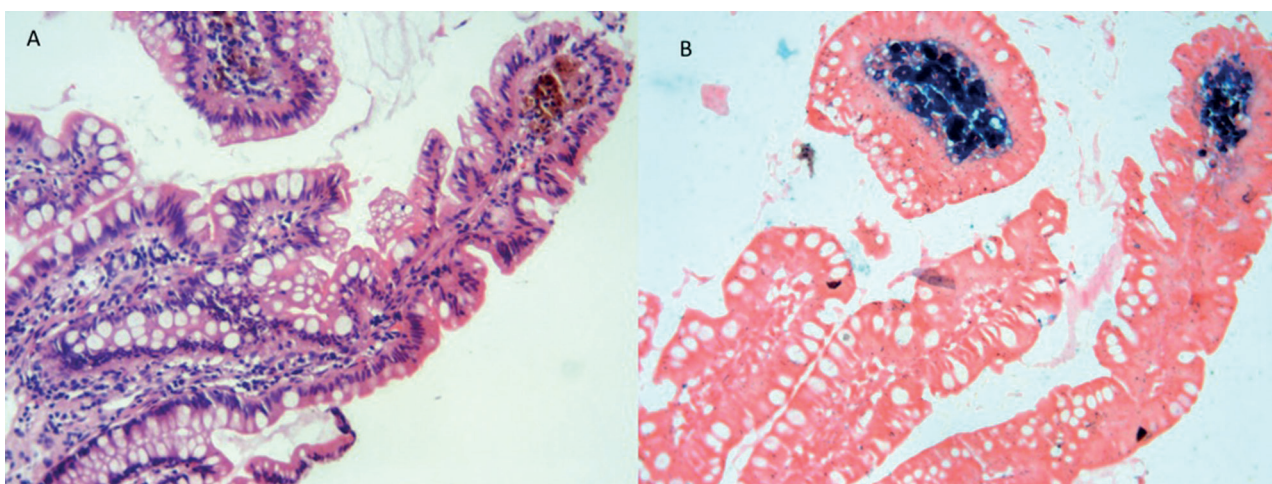


Fig. 2 — Melanotic pigment in the lamina propria (A) which was confirmed to be iron on Pearl's stain (B).

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